

1.1.0 PHILOSOPHY & GOALS

Wisconsin's residents are its most valuable resource. Some residents are unemployed due to poor education, poor job skills and other barriers to employment. These problems not only limit individual achievement, but also they hold back the state's economic growth.

The goal of Wisconsin Works (W-2) is to provide necessary and appropriate services to prepare individuals to work, and to obtain and maintain viable, self-sustaining employment, which will promote economic growth. W-2 is one of several work-based programs designed to ensure that everyone in Wisconsin shares in our economic opportunities.

W-2 policies are guided by the consistent application of the following philosophical principles:

1. Substantially all citizens want to be able to support their families, want to be economically self-sufficient and want to be employable members of the workforce.
2. W-2 shall be participant friendly. Each W-2 agency shall explain the full spectrum of employment, education, and training and supportive services available to assist individuals and families to transition into the workforce. When individuals and families are given adequate information about employment services, they will make an informed choice about whether or not to pursue those services.
3. Individuals determined to be eligible for participation in W-2 are obligated to cooperate with their employability plans or face sanctions. W-2 agencies rendering the services are obliged to properly and carefully assess each individual's specific needs in order to promote success in transitioning into the workforce.
4. Families are the foundation of society and are the vehicle through which children are nurtured and protected. W-2 programs and policies designed to assist participants in family formation will be evaluated in light of how well they strengthen and promote healthy, nurturing, and economically secure families where both parents are responsible.
5. W-2 agencies will assist families with multiple barriers to employment, ensure that all participants have equal access to the full spectrum of resources, and avoid arbitrary and inappropriate sanctions.
6. All programs and services shall be rendered in a fair and just manner, including adverse actions such as denials and sanctions, and participants will be informed of their appeal rights.
7. Individuals are part of various communities of people and places. W-2 operates in ways that enhance the manner in which communities support individual efforts to achieve self-sufficiency.
8. W-2 goals are best achieved by working with providers, who are committed to customer-friendly service, who partner with employers and other service

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providers, who are innovative, and who strive to continuously improve the provision of service.

W-2 accomplishes this goal by providing needed services in a comprehensive fashion, including such services as job readiness motivation, job retention and advancement skill training as well as childcare. W-2 employment and training services are available to any eligible Wisconsin resident unable to sustain employment or advance in the job market. W-2 services are not limited to recipients of cash assistance.

1.2.0 EMPLOYMENT LADDER

It is W-2's goal to connect people with work as soon as possible. This is done by immediate placement on the W-2 employment ladder. The employment ladder consists of four rungs. Individuals who are capable of working may be placed on the Unsubsidized Employment rung of the ladder. Individuals who are not ready may be placed on the subsidized employment rung or one of the work experience training rungs.

Starting with the highest rung on the employment ladder, these rungs are:



The W-2 agency must ensure that each participant:

1. Enters the highest possible rung on the employment ladder on which the participant is capable of participating; and
2. Moves up to the next appropriate rung at the earliest opportunity, with unsubsidized employment the ultimate goal. Each new rung should bring with it greater self-sufficiency.

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In addition to employment search and placement assistance, W-2 provides a delivery system and access to supportive services necessary to facilitate employment. A wide range of work training and education services, as well as all W-2 supportive services, will be integrated in one location when possible.

1.3.0 JOB CENTERS

Wisconsin's vision for a single, comprehensive employment and training system designed to help job seekers find and job holders maintain employment by providing them with needed services is actualized through a one-stop Job Center approach. The Job Centers provide one-stop shopping for employers to meet workforce needs and for job seekers to obtain career planning, job placement and advancement, and training at the local level.

A local Job Center network will provide a wide array of services to job seekers, including W-2 participants. Additional services available to low income families and individuals include, but are not limited to: Food Stamps, Medical Assistance, Child Care, Emergency Assistance, Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program, transportation assistance, and Job Access Loans.

Job Centers are open to any and all job seekers, including W-2 participants. (See Appendix 3)

1.4.0 W-2 PARTICIPANTS

The primary purpose of W-2 is to prepare eligible parents, who are not job ready, for unsubsidized employment. Consequently, not everyone is eligible for W-2 services. There are four categories of persons who may be eligible for services of the W-2 program:

1. Custodial parents of minor children may access all W-2 services.

Parents may be eligible if they meet the financial and nonfinancial eligibility requirements (see Chapter 2).

Both single parents and married parents may be eligible.

Custodial parents caring for a child under 12 weeks of age may also be eligible for benefits if they meet the eligibility requirements (see Chapter 3).

2. Noncustodial parents subject to a support order for a child may access some W-2 services.

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Noncustodial parents subject to a support order(s) for a child(ren) whose custodial parent is participating in W-2 may qualify for limited W-2 services. The noncustodial parent must meet financial and nonfinancial requirements.

Services available include participating in self-sufficiency planning with a Financial and Employment Planner (FEP), ongoing case management with a FEP, and work readiness training. In addition, unpaid community work experience may be an option for noncustodial parents who have outstanding court ordered child support. Noncustodial parents will not qualify for subsidized categories of W-2 services, but will have access to the full range of employment and other services available at Job Centers. Both the Children First program and the case management services to noncustodial parents provide work experience and training to unemployed and/or under employed noncustodial parents who are unable to meet child support obligations.

3. Pregnant women may receive case management services.

Pregnant women with no other custodial children may be eligible for some W-2 services if nonfinancial and financial tests are met. Pregnant women are eligible to meet with a FEP for case management services and assistance in seeking unsubsidized employment.

4. All minor parents are eligible to receive W-2 case management services.

All minors with children, regardless of their income or that of their parents, are eligible to meet with a FEP. In order to qualify for other W-2 related services (such as Child Care, transportation, and health care) the income and assets of the minor's parents will be taken into account. Minor parents may also be eligible for a Job Access Loan if they are within 2 months of age 18.

1.5.0 REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

W-2 agencies must follow the guidelines set forth by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). If a participant discloses a disability, reasonable accommodations must be offered. All staff must be knowledgeable of the resources available through the Job Center or W-2 Equal Opportunity Coordinator to assist in making that accommodation and must offer these services in a culturally competent manner.

Staff must determine if the person needs any reasonable accommodation to participate in activities or obtain services including:

1. Eligibility determination
2. Referral procedures
3. Mobility/transportation planning
4. Employment planning

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5. W-2 placement
6. Fact finding review
7. Other Job Center services
8. Child support cooperation
9. Any other activities included in the employability plan

All staff must be familiar with the civil rights standards in service delivery, including the need to know the resources available to obtain translators for people whose first language is not English, interpreters for people who are hearing impaired or deaf, or how to put materials produced by the W-2 agency in alternate formats such as on tape or in Braille.

Sometimes the person may need assistance to determine what reasonable accommodation could increase his or her ability to fully participate in the W-2 program, including the needs of the dependent child(ren). The FEP may need to consult with experts on accommodations.

Resources which may provide information include:

1. Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR)
2. County Social/Human Services Departments
3. 51.42/.437 Boards
4. Independent Living Centers
5. Private rehabilitation firms
6. Community organizations serving people with disabilities
7. Division of Workforce Solutions (DWS) Equal Opportunity Office

1.6.0 PARTICIPANT FLOW

The vision of W-2 for program participation and case management is to have the Financial and Employment Planner (FEP) be the single person who performs all case management services for the W-2 participant. This approach allows a more simplified process for the participating family and is more likely to engender the building of a supportive relationship between the participant and the FEP. A growing body of "welfare to work" research supports a single caseworker approach as being both effective and cost efficient.

For those persons not seeking W-2 employment placement services, but who wish to apply for supportive services, a Supportive Services Planner is the primary worker.

1.6.1 FEP as Public Employee

Current federal regulations allow only for public employees to determine Medical Assistance and Food Stamp eligibility. That public employee may be either a FEP or a Supportive Service Planner (SSP). Eligibility determination includes the eligibility

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interview, verifying information, and entering information into CARES at application, when changes are reported, and at review. The CARES system will send all alerts related to Food Stamps and Medical Assistance to the primary worker. For matters regarding Food Stamps and MA, the participant reports directly to the primary. The FEP remains ultimately responsible for W-2; however, at the W-2 agency's discretion, the Supportive Services Planner may do W-2 eligibility determination. This does not include work assessment, placement in a W-2 employment position, or case management.

It is expected that, in counties in which the W-2 agency and the county/tribal social/human services agency are not the same, county/tribes will co-locate staff at the W-2 agency to meet caseload needs and provide access to eligibility determination services for Food Stamps (FS) and Medical Assistance (MA) to current and potential W-2 and Food Stamp Employment and Training (FSET) populations. In doing so, county/tribal agencies and W-2 agencies must have coordination agreements in place outlining how the W-2 agency staff and county/tribal agency staff will coordinate responsibilities in order to provide this seamless service to persons seeking assistance. Coordination agreements must include, at a minimum, how the agencies will meet federal legal guidelines requiring that public employees process Food Stamp and Medical Assistance applications and certify eligibility.

1.6.2 W-2 and Income Maintenance Program Access

When the W-2 program is administered by a county or tribe, it is expected that the FEP will be the primary caseworker for the W-2 program and the Income Maintenance Programs (Medical Assistance (MA) and Food Stamp (FS)). Wisconsin Statutes require that in locations where the W-2 program is not administered by the County or Tribe, the W-2 agency must cooperate with the county department or tribal governing body to ensure that services delivered under the W-2, Food Stamp and Medicaid Programs are coordinated with the county or tribal governing body in a manner that most effectively serves the recipients of those services (Wis. Stats. 49.143(2)(d)). Federal TANF regulations under which the W-2 program must operate also require TANF agencies in States that have a joint application process for TANF and the Medicaid/Food Stamp Programs to provide an opportunity to initiate the application process for Medicaid and Food Stamps whether or not they are applying for W-2.

When there are multiple sites for application processing within a county, it is essential that the Income Maintenance (IM) and W-2 agencies work together to assure residents are provided information regarding correct application site location, and that procedures are in place to protect application filing dates for Medicaid and Food Stamps. Applicants cannot be sent to another site to begin the application process. Instead, they must be offered the opportunity to initiate the application process. This is accomplished by the agency completing Client Registration in CARES, generating the Request for Assistance (RFA) and scheduling an intake interview with the agency that will complete the eligibility determination. The result of the priority service screening that occurs during Client Registration will determine whether the person is scheduled for a priority service appointment or a regular intake appointment. This will ensure that the application process can be completed without

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unnecessary delays for the applicants which may result in devastating consequences for the applicants and their minor children.

1.6.3 Roles Performed in the W-2 Agency

Outlined below are the functional roles performed by the W-2 agency employee (or in some cases, its contractor). These roles describe the grouping of activities into logical functions which may be performed by the same person; however, they may or may not translate into a defined position. W-2 agencies are not required to devote a position to the Receptionist, Resource Specialist (RS), or Supportive Services Planner (SSP) roles, but the W-2 agencies are expected to ensure that each role is performed as necessary.

There are specific certification requirements for those performing the role of the Financial and Employment Planner (FEP). While a FEP can perform the activities assigned to other functional roles, only persons with the required credentials may fulfill the FEP function.

The goal of the Department is to allow as much flexibility as possible to the W-2 agencies. In turn, agencies should determine how they will carry out each activity and which individual employees will be assigned to the functional roles.

After meeting this minimum requirement of providing the services in the chart, it is then up to each county/tribe and W-2 agency to determine whether additional county/tribal services will be offered to the other populations at the W-2 Agency site [i.e., Social Security Income (SSI) Related MA, Kinship Care, Foster Care, etc.]. This is an option for county/tribe and W-2 agencies and provides flexibility for the co-location of additional staff if the resources and physical locations allow for an expansion of services at the W-2 agency site. This is expected in order to serve eligible working families and single persons at the W-2/Job center locations. It is important to have at least one alternative site for MA only participants to apply if they wish to do so.

1.6.3.1 Benefits and Services Offered At Wisconsin Works (W-2) Agencies Brochure

Pursuant to s. 49.143(2)(es), Stats., W-2 agencies are required to provide a one-page description of benefits and services available at the W-2 agency to all individuals that ask for assistance. Therefore, effective January 1, 2000, all W-2 agencies are required to provide every individual who requests assistance of any kind, the *Benefits and Services Offered At Wisconsin Works (W-2) Agencies* brochure (DES 11890-P).

W-2 agencies must have a supply of the brochure available in all of the public locations within their offices. In addition, at a minimum it is suggested that the W-2 agencies ensure a supply of the publication is available for Greeters, Receptionists and Resource Specialists to give to people they speak with

COUNTY/TRIBE	W-2 AGENCY
Medical Assistance Persons Age 65+ Blind/Disabled Persons Institutionalized Persons Community Waiver Participants Foster Care Recipients Kinship Care Recipients Children of SSI Caretakers Adoption Assistance Recipients Katie Beckett Participants Healthy Start (see W-2 agency) Non W-2 Families (see W-2 agency) Badgercare (program for uninsured families)	Medical Assistance* For families (including single pregnant women) in which the parent is applying for or participating in a W-2 employment position or W-2 Services (including W-2 Case Management, Child Care, Transportation, JALs)**
Food Stamp Single Persons Households with no Children Under Age 18 Elderly or Disabled Persons Cases where no one is a participant in Food Stamp Employment & Training (FSET)	Food Stamps* For families (including single pregnant women) in which the parent is applying for or participating in a W-2 employment position or W-2 Services (including W-2 Case Management, Child Care, Transportation, ESAP, JALs)** For cases where anyone in the FS group is a mandatory participant in Food Stamp Employment & Training (FSET)
Child Care Family Day Care Certification Authorization and Payment to Day Care Facility	Child Care (W-2 and FSET) Eligibility Determination (except Milwaukee County)
General Assistance	Wisconsin Works (W-2) Employment Positions Job Access Loans Transportation
Burial Expense	Emergency Assistance
Foster Care	
Kinship Care	
SSI Child Supplement	

*Requires subcontract or cooperative agreement for staffing at W-2 site necessary to meet federal legal requirements for eligibility determinations by government employees. These functions must be performed by a government employee hired under a merit personnel system.

**Medical Assistance and Food Stamps remain entitlements. A W-2 agency may not deny a person the right to make application for MA and FS if they are not applying for W-2.

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1.6.3.2 *Receptionist*

The Receptionist is generally the first person to meet with the customer entering a Job Center or W-2 agency. When a customer approaches the receptionist, they should first be given the opportunity to ask for information about a specific program or service. For those customers who are not familiar with the programs or services available through the Job Center, the receptionist must consider all Job Center programs that may potentially serve them and provide information on each. This ensures that the customer will make an informed choice about which programs and services to pursue. If the customer wishes to apply for or indicates an interest in learning more about the W-2 program, the receptionist will schedule an appointment with a Resource Specialist (RS) the same day or no later than the following working day.

1.6.3.3 *Resource Specialist (W-2 Intake and Informed Choice)*

The role of the Resource Specialist is to assist each customer of the W-2 agency in determining which programs or services are likely to support their efforts at employment and self-sufficiency. In fulfilling this role, the RS will perform these primary functions:

1. Inform each customer about:
 - a. Services that are available through the W-2 program including employment position placements, case management services, and supportive services. The customer must be made aware that the provision of W-2 services is based on eligibility criteria and a functional assessment by W-2 agency staff.
 - b. Job Center partner programs such as JobNet, WAA, WIA, WtW and DVR.
 - c. Supportive service programs such as Food Stamps, Medicaid, Badgercare, Child Care, Emergency Assistance, the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) benefit, the Low-Income Heating Energy Assistance Program and local housing assistance programs.
 - d. Community resources offered through the Children Services Network, based on needs identified through the initial review process.
2. Perform the initial review of need for employment-related services. This will include:
 - a. Asking customers about the type of employment assistance they are interested in receiving.
 - b. Gathering basic information about the customers' recent job search efforts, employment skills, work history, education, income and assets.

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- c. Determining how the family/household composition and circumstances affect the customers' ability to work.
 - d. Assessing current child support case status.
 - e. Screening for priority status.
- 3. After providing information to the customer about available programs and services and gathering information through the initial review, assist the customer in determining what programs and services are likely to support their efforts at employment and self-sufficiency, including:
 - a. Utilizing the programs and services of the Job Center partners to receive job search assistance, work training opportunities, education and training opportunities or job retention and advancement services;
 - b. Determining if there are other public assistance programs or resources that may address the financial need of the participant. Examples include: Supplemental Security Income, Unemployment Insurance, Food Stamps, Medicaid and local housing assistance.
 - c. Applying for assistance through the W-2 program.
 - 1. The RS must refer the customer to any programs in which there is an interest indicated.
 - 2. Applicants who wish to pursue W-2 after meeting with the RS must be referred to the FEP.
 - 3. The RS may initiate the interactive interview using the W-2 application to record nonfinancial and financial information such as income, assets, job history, education and family composition.

As a condition of W-2 eligibility, the RS may:

- a. Assign job search to all persons who are clearly able to conduct a productive job search during the period of time the application is being processed. An Employability Plan must be developed when up-front job search is assigned. (See 5.1.2)
- b. Require the applicant to apply for other appropriate public assistance programs or resources.

The RS must explain the child support program. The booklet "Wisconsin's Child Support Program" and the "Child Support and You -- 100% Pass-through" pamphlet must be given to the applicant. The RS must explain the child support requirements for all appropriate individuals, including noncustodial parents and pregnant women. Explain the requirement to cooperate with child support efforts and provide the applicant with and explain the Good Cause Notice and Good Cause Claim forms. See Chapter 16 for more information on Child Support requirements.

At no point does the RS determine final eligibility or placement in a W-2 employment position. These are the responsibilities of the FEP based, in part, on the information

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collected by the RS. Applicants who only request supportive services may be referred to the Supportive Services Planner (SSP). All applicants will be referred to the Child Support program via the CARES/KIDS automated interface.

1.6.3.4 *Financial & Employment Planner (FEP)*

The FEP is central to W-2 integrated case management and signifies the merger of the former economic support and Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) case manager functions. This means that participants in W-2 employment positions will interact with only one worker for all matters that concern W-2 participation, payments, and supportive services. In keeping with this important W-2 tenet, a single FEP must provide case management, eligibility determination, W-2 placement determinations, Employability Plan (EP) development, and all other services for a participant in a W-2 employment position. Services may include Job Access Loans, determining eligibility for Child Care, Food Stamps, Medical Assistance, Emergency Assistance, etc.

It is mandatory that a single FEP provide case management services and supportive services for a person in a W-2 employment position. However, a Financial and Employment Planner (FEP) may delegate varying degrees of responsibility to an SSP. Although a FEP may have this staff assistance, the FEP has the ultimate responsibility for the case, including correct eligibility determination for W-2, Medical Assistance, and Food Stamps. If the FEP is not a public employee, the SSP must make the MA and FS determinations (see 1.5.1). As the primary case manager, the applicant/ participant reports directly to the FEP. The FEP may request an applicant/participant discuss the case with the SSP. The relationship between the FEP and SSP must be a cooperative one. The FEP must also coordinate with other agencies to facilitate needed services such as treatment, education, training and formal assessments. Because case management for persons in W-2 employment positions is provided solely by a FEP, each agency, as required by state statute, must have at least one FEP. All FEPs must be certified in accordance with state law and administrative rule. (See DWD 17 certification rule).

Although the W-2 agency will decide, it is generally anticipated that persons moving in and out of W-2 will retain the same FEP or FEP/SSP team. If a FEP is not initially involved, the same SSP should continue if a FEP is later required.

The FEP must meet with the applicant within five working days of the date the W-2 agency receives a signed application. The FEP has seven working days after this first meeting to make a placement determination. The FEP uses the information gathered to determine eligibility and placement.

The main functions of the FEP are:

1. Eligibility determination;
2. Assessment;
3. Employability planning;
4. Service referral; and

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5. Ongoing case management.

These main functions include, but are not limited to, these responsibilities:

1. Determining eligibility for: Job Access Loans, Food Stamps, Medical Assistance, Child Care, Emergency Assistance, and other benefits or services as needed and/or requested. Verify information necessary to process the W-2 application. Ensure that all data is entered into the Client Assistance for Re-employment and Economic Support (CARES) system in an accurate and timely fashion and that correct payments are issued in a timely manner.
2. Providing information on basic money management and the personal work habits and life skills needed to succeed in the working world.
3. Performing job placement screening by utilizing information collected in the W-2 application such as work history (including recent job search efforts), education, interests, skills and abilities, family composition, and barriers to employment. Consider barriers to employment in determining the level of employability, making placement decisions, and referrals to other services. Assigning reasonable job search activities prior to and after the determination of W-2 eligibility.
4. Determining placement in a W-2 employment position, if barriers prevent obtaining unsubsidized employment.
5. Developing a W-2 Employability Plan (EP) in consultation with the participant. Designing the plan to move the participant to unsubsidized employment as soon as possible. Documenting requirements for W-2 work training, education and training activities and incorporate Learnfare activity requirements as necessary.
6. Monitoring compliance with the Employability Plan and participant progress on a regular basis, providing feedback to participants, and processing payments. Identifying noncompliance, determine good cause, and apply payment reductions. Recording participant progress information in CARES.
7. Assessing the effectiveness of the Employability Plan regularly and making revisions as necessary for persons placed in a Trial Job, CSJ, or W-2 T. This may include initiating follow-up contact with the participant and/or work training provider and determining whether participation levels should be modified.
8. Interpreting and explaining policies governing eligibility. This includes explaining the responsibilities and requirements outlined in the Participation Agreement and securing the applicant's signature prior to beginning a W-2 employment position. These include, but are not limited to: a) explaining that failure to cooperate during the application phase may result in ineligibility; and b) providing information on the Fact Finding Process. In addition, the FEP should explain the W-2 agency's discrimination complaint process.

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9. Utilizing the Case Management Resource Guide and other screening tools to determine whether an outside professional assessment is needed to determine appropriate participation requirements.
10. Referring applicants who supply questionable information for front-end verification.
11. Referring participants suspected of fraudulent activity for fraud investigation.
12. Referring applicants and participants to other community services such as food pantries, domestic abuse services, literacy councils, child welfare agencies, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and alcohol and other drug abuse (AODA)/ mental health services when necessary.
13. Assuring that final eligibility information for W-2, MA, Child Care, and FS is transmitted to the child support agency, and assuring that participants cooperate with their child support agency. During eligibility reviews, the FEP must also review with the participant his or her child support assignment.
14. Explaining Learnfare, assessing Learnfare status for dependent children in a W-2 group, and providing or arranging for Learnfare case management as specified in the Learnfare Case Management Manual. Ensure enrollment and attendance for dependent child(ren) subject to Learnfare is promoted, verified, monitored and appropriately entered in CARES.
15. Providing follow-up case management to ensure job retention.
16. Maintaining an effective working relationship with the Job Center partners.

The FEP will provide follow-up case management services for at least 6 months to participants who progress from a W-2 work training position to an unsubsidized position to encourage and support job retention. At local agency discretion, the participant may continue to receive the follow-up case management services of the FEP beyond the mandatory six-month follow-up period as necessary. Agencies are encouraged to continue follow-up case management services for six months to prevent recidivism and ensure stabilization. The FEP may also arrange for continued service through the Job Center.

1.6.3.5

Supportive Services Planner (SSP)

After exploring other resources and/or meeting with the RS, an applicant may decide to request only supportive services or other non-W-2 program benefits. In some cases, a person may be determined ineligible for a W-2 employment position by the FEP. In these instances, the applicant/participant may meet with a Supportive Services Planner (SSP). The SSP determines eligibility for W-2 supportive services and other programs, but does not have the responsibility to determine eligibility for a W-2 employment position, unless delegated to do so by the FEP. (See Financial and

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Employment Planner Role) If the applicant/participant is not eligible for or does not request a W-2 employment position, the SSP determines eligibility for and provides for the delivery of these services which may include:

1. Food Stamps
2. Transportation assistance
3. Medicaid
4. Child Care
5. Emergency Assistance

After eligibility for FS, MA, and or child care is confirmed, the SSP must assure that the case is referred to child support services. When the W-2 agency and the county agency are not the same, if a client files a good cause claim for noncooperation with child support with both the W-2 and county agencies, the SSP will evaluate the case and make the decision on whether to grant good cause. If the client requests a fact finding review and a fair hearing regarding the good cause determination, the fair hearing officer's decision will take precedence.

1.7.0

COMMUNITY STEERING COMMITTEE

Community Steering Committees (CSCs) are public/private partnerships established by each W-2 agency to provide ties to the local communities with strong leadership from the business sector.

The CSC will help the W-2 agency identify unsubsidized and subsidized employment opportunities, as well as create Trial Jobs, Community Service Jobs, and W-2 Transition positions, for those individuals who are not ready for unsubsidized employment.

CSCs will have responsibilities in the following general areas:

1. Establishing strong ties to local employers;
2. Reinforcing the role employers have in creating and identifying job opportunities for W-2 participants;
3. Developing employment strategies;
4. Promoting entrepreneurship;
5. Providing mentoring;
6. Improving access to child care;
7. Identifying motivational training programs, including programs that enhance parenting skills;

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8. Expanding availability of child care;
9. Expanding access to transportation;
10. Collaborating with the Children's Services Network;
11. Ensuring that training and education programs are relevant to the community's business needs; and
12. The CSC will also help to promote the understanding and use of the Earned Income Credit (EIC) among both employers and their employees. The EIC is specifically designed to help low-income working families with children achieve an income above the poverty level.

The CSC must consist of between 12 and 15 members, appointed by the county chief elected official or chairperson of the tribal governing body. The CSC must include representatives of local business interests and be reflective of the racial/ethnic, gender, age, and disability composition of the geographical service area of the W-2 agency.

If the county agency is not the W-2 agency, the CSC must include both :

1. The director (or designee) of the county department of human or social services
2. One other representative of the county department.

The CSC will be expected to collaborate with other statewide boards, charged with regional, employment-related responsibilities, such as:

1. Workforce Development Boards (WDB);
2. Local Collaborative Planning Teams; and
3. The Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS).

In addition, Milwaukee County Community Steering Committees are required to appoint a representative to serve on the Countywide Administrative Council, a body created to coordinate CSC activities in Milwaukee.

For more information, the following publications are available through the W-2 agency or Area Administrator:

1. Community Steering Committee Development Guide
2. Community Steering Committee Operations Guide

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W-2 agencies must develop a Children's Services Network (CSN) which provides a link to community services for children and families who often do not have personal networks in the community and assist them in developing these networks. The provision of information should be done through a partnership between the W-2 agency and the CSN.

At a minimum, the CSN must provide information about the following services:

1. Charitable food centers
2. Charitable clothing centers
3. Subsidized and low-income housing
4. Transportation subsidies
5. Special services for children and adults with disabilities
6. The state supplemental food program for women, infants and children (WIC)
7. Child care programs
8. Homeless shelters
9. Domestic abuse services and sexual assault victim services
10. Workplace protections
11. Child welfare services
12. Public health and other health services
13. Other additions based on collaboration with child protective services
14. Financial literacy resources
15. Head Start
16. Financial counseling

In order to provide an effective link to services, the network structure should include, at a minimum, the following:

1. An identified group of community organizations, agencies and other providers of support or services that have an on-going relationship and communicate on a regular basis;
2. An identified contact point (agency, person, phone number) to provide a single access point for participants and an information repository for service providers; and
3. A means of identifying community needs. This can be as simple as logging requests for types of services and comparing demands to known suppliers of given services. This could also be accomplished by using periodic community assessments conducted by other entities.

In addition to the services listed above, the Network will be most useful if it provides information on a wide range of child and family services and programs. The Department suggests incorporating additional services and programs that make sense in each community.

W-2 Participant Flow and Access to Services Model

